

Pigmeat Quality Assurance Standard

Processor Standard



**Pigmeat
Quality
Assurance
Standard**

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Note: The Processor needs to be fully aware of the requirements of the Pig Producer Standard.

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I Introduction

Introduction

This section contains important general information for Processors and forms part of the overall requirements of the Standard. It is crucial that Processors take sufficient time to read and fully understand this section of the Standard (Introduction, all sub-sections).

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- 1.0 General
- 1.1 Background
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1.0

GENERAL

The relevant Processor requirements are described in this Standard for Processors (i.e. Section 1, Introduction; Section 2, Scheme Regulations; Section 3, Processor Requirements and Section 4, Appendices).

However, the Processor also needs to understand fully the Producer requirements as set out in the Bord Bia Pigmeat Quality Assurance Standard for Producers.

The Bord Bia Pigmeat Quality Assurance Scheme is an integrated management scheme involving the primary producer and the factory processor working in partnership to provide the customer with Quality Assured product.

The Scheme describes the essential quality assurance requirements from primary production through factory processing to final dispatch, which are necessary to meet customer needs.

1.1

BACKGROUND

- a) The Bord Bia Pigmeat Quality Assurance Scheme is based on the Processor and Producer Standards. It requires the Pigmeat Processor to work in partnership with the Producer to ensure best practice in Pigmeat production and processing.

- b) Pigmeat produced and processed in accordance with the requirements laid down in the Standard is described as Quality Assured Pigmeat. No other implication can be taken from this term.
- c) Other Codes of Practice that embody the specific provisions of this Standard may be acceptable, subject to formal approval by Bord Bia.
- d) The Bord Bia Pigmeat Quality Assurance Standard was developed by an expert group representing Bord Bia, Teagasc, the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, the Pigmeat industry (Producers and Processors), Industry Advisors and the Department of Agriculture and Food.

First introduced in 1989, the Scheme was revised in 1997. It is now further updated to meet the requirements of EN45011 for Quality Assurance Schemes; to accommodate recent developments in international Quality Management Systems, Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP); and to incorporate the most recent EU derived Food Hygiene legislation. This revision (Revision 02) replaces the previous revision (Revision 01) issued in 1997.

- e) The full onus of responsibility for ensuring compliance with the requirements of this Processor Standard is on Processors participating in the Scheme and not on Bord Bia or its auditors or any other third party.
- f) The requirements detailed in this Standard do not and are not intended to replace any statutory obligations of the industry.

1.2

OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of this Standard are:

- To set out the requirements for best practice in Pigmeat production at Processor level,
- To provide a uniform mechanism for recording and monitoring Pigmeat quality assurance criteria in Processing with a view to achieving continuing improvement in production standards,
- To provide a means of demonstrating best practice at Processor level,
- To underpin the successful marketing of quality assured pigmeat and derived products through identification of approved product with a Quality Assured Mark.

1.3

FORMAL TRAINING

The term “formal training” is used to indicate the requirement that the training described was received from a national or public body or from a Bord Bia approved organisation/individual and that a certificate is available.

1.4

DEFINITIONS

Auditor: the independent auditor carrying out audits against the Standard.

Bord Bia: the Quality Assurance Division of Bord Bia, the Irish Food Board.

Certification Body: the agency/Committee to which the Quality Assurance Board has devolved responsibility and authority for all certification decisions with regard to membership of the Scheme.

Certification Period: this will be 18 months from the date of certification under the Scheme or until the next audit.

DAF: the Department of Agriculture and Food.

FSAI: the Food Safety Authority of Ireland.

HACCP: Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point, a system for identifying how food can become unsafe for human consumption and then deciding how it can be prevented.

Member: a Producer or Processor that is certified under the PQAS and is shown on the PQAS register/database.

Producer: a DAF registered Pigmeat Producer with a valid National Pig Identification and Traceability Scheme (NPITS) number.

Processor Standard: the requirements as set out in Sections 1-4 in this document (Processor Standard) which detail current best practices for the processing of Pigmeat.

PQAS: the Bord Bia Pigmeat Quality Assurance Scheme.

PQAS Register/Database: the register/database of the current certified members indicating the membership status.

Quality Assurance Board: an independent subsidiary board within Bord Bia that has overall responsibility for policy, certification and appeals for the Quality Assurance Schemes.

Scheme: the Pigmeat Quality Assurance Scheme consists of three elements:

- The Producer Standard,
- The Processor Standard,
- The process for ensuring that the requirements as set out in the Standards are met (through auditing, certification, etc.) and that the relevant details are published.

Teagasc: Agriculture and Food Development Authority.

1.5

LEGISLATIVE BASIS OF THE STANDARD

This Standard has been derived bearing in mind the requirements of the following legislation and standards:

- EC Hygiene Regulations 852-854 of 2004 (as amended).
- Recognised international Quality Management Systems (such as ISO9001: 2000).
- Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point analysis (HACCP), as outlined in EC/852/2004 Art 5.
- Relevant National and EU derived legislative requirements.
- EN 45011 (1998) General Requirements for Bodies Operating Product Certification Systems.

1.6

CAUTIONARY NOTES

Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this Standard, Bord Bia cannot accept any responsibility for errors or omissions.

It is not a requirement that Processor be registered to any part of ISO 9001:2000 or equivalent and it is not implied that meeting the requirements of this Standard will automatically mean full compliance with any of the above standards or regulations.

Bord Bia is not liable for any potential or estimated loss of earnings (by applicants or members) resulting from compliance with any requirement of this scheme or in regard to the consequences of being found to be in breach of Critical or other requirements.

2 Scheme Regulations

Scheme Regulations

This section contains important general information for Processors and forms part of the overall requirements of the Standard. It is crucial that Processors take sufficient time to read and fully understand this section of the Standard (Scheme Regulations, all sub-sections).

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- 2.1 Eligibility
- 2.2 Control and Monitoring
- 2.3 Terms, Requirements Categories and Application of Non-Compliances
- 2.4 Certification Decisions
- 2.5 Appeals
- 2.6 Complaints
- 2.7 Revision Updates
- 2.8 Notification of Change
- 2.9 Use of the Scheme Logo

2.1

ELIGIBILITY

2.1.1

Pigmeat Products

Only Pigs and Pigmeat sourced from Producers and Processors respectively that have been certified under the Bord Bia Pig Quality Assurance Scheme (PQAS) are eligible for inclusion in the Scheme.

Imported product may also be eligible for inclusion provided that it is sourced from a quality assurance scheme that has been deemed equivalent by the Technical Advisory Committee. In this case, the origin of the meat must be clearly identified on the label.

The following products are eligible for inclusion in the scheme:

- Pork Carcasses and Cuts,
- Wiltshire Bacon and Bone-in Primals,
- Bone-in and Boneless Bacon Products,
- Cooked Hams,
- Pork Mince,
- Pork Trimmings.

Other value-added Pigmeat products that have been produced using quality assured Pigmeat as its only meat source may also be marketed under the scheme, however a specific application must be made in this regard. The Technical Advisory Committee, who will advise on the specific conditions that may apply prior to approval, will consider the application.

2.1.2 *Membership*

Membership of the Scheme is voluntary and open to all Pigmeat Processors (Abattoirs, Boning Halls, Value Added Processors) that are approved and/or licensed in accordance with relevant national and/or EU regulations or hold a temporary derogation under Council directive 91/498/EEC as amended.

Processors seeking membership must initially apply in writing to Bord Bia and will then receive a copy of this Pigmeat Quality Assurance Standard together with an Application Form.

The application will then be evaluated and, if appropriate, a full independent audit of the Processor will be carried out to evaluate the capability of the applicant to meet all the requirements of the Standard.

When the Processor is deemed to have complied with the requirements of the Standard as determined by independent audit, the Processor will be considered by Bord Bia for certification under the Scheme.

Prior to certification, the Processor will be required to:

1. Sign an Undertaking and Indemnity Form.
2. Formally apply for permission to use the Bord Bia Pigmeat Quality Assurance Scheme Logo.
3. Formally undertake to use this Logo only on Pigmeat produced in full accordance with the Pigmeat Quality Assurance Standard.

When certified, the Processor will be issued with a Membership Certificate and will be listed on the Bord Bia register/database which is published.

The Member Processor is thereafter permitted to use the Quality Assured Logo on approved specified grades/packaging and/or related documentation.

Member Processors will be charged an annual membership fee.

2.1.3 *Database Information*

The names of all certified Processors will be published on the Bord Bia PQAS Database/register.

2.2

Control and Monitoring

CONTROL

Overall control of the Scheme will be exercised by the Bord Bia Quality Assurance Board. This Board is representative of the relevant sectors of the food industry and collaborates with the Technical Advisory Committee, which is responsible for drafting the Standard and formulating required amendments.

The decision of the Quality Assurance Board on any matter relating to the control or operation of the Scheme is final.

Monitoring

Monitoring of Processor compliance with the requirements of the Standard will be carried out by Bord Bia or its agents.

Each Processor will be independently audited at determined intervals (at a minimum once per year). Independent Auditors with sectoral experience will carry out these audits and a full report will be issued to the Processor.

Bord Bia reserves the right to carry out Audits or Spot Checks on an unannounced basis for the purposes of verifying compliance with the requirements of the Standard or to determine that corrective/preventive actions specified during audit are in place.

Bord Bia reserves the right to remove samples of pigmeat for the purposes of testing by an independent laboratory to determine compliance with the requirements of the Standard.

Auditors are entitled to seek access to, make copies of, or take extracts from official Veterinary office documentation, with the agreement of the Veterinary Officer on site.

Auditors are entitled to seek access to relevant regulatory reports.

2.3

2.3.1 *Explanation of terms "Must", "Should", and Categories "Critical, Categories 1-3"*

TERMS, REQUIREMENTS CATEGORIES AND APPLICATION OF NON-COMPLIANCES

Mandatory Requirements are indicated in the text with the term "must". Non-mandatory requirements are indicated in the text with the term "should".

The categories of requirements and their meaning and significance are detailed here:

- **Critical:** where a breach of the requirements may constitute a grave and immediate food safety risk. These requirements are indicated in the text in **bold underlined** typeface and the word “Critical” appears in bold underlined text in parentheses at the end of the sentence or paragraph as follows (**Critical**).
- **Category 1:** where the requirements deal with core best practices. These requirements are indicated in the text in bold typeface and the word “Category 1” appears in **bold** text in parentheses at the end of the sentence or paragraph as follows (**Category 1**).
- **Category 2:** all the mandatory requirements not Critical or Category 1 are Category 2 and appear in the text in normal typeface.
- **Category 3:** These are recommendations for best practice and are indicated in the text in “italic type”. While not mandatory, they are expected to be adopted unless evidence exists that the requirement(s) need not be adopted. This evidence will be examined on a case-by-case basis during audits.

2.3.2

*Application of
Non-Compliances
(as determined by
independent audits)
by Category*

Critical

Where a critical non-compliance has been raised, applicant Processors cannot be certified to this standard and existing certified Processors cannot continue to supply Pigmeat under the Quality Assurance Scheme and their certification will be withdrawn.

Note: The Processor can re-apply when evidence is available that the problem has been rectified.

Category 1

Processors against whom a category 1 non-compliance has been raised must give an immediate commitment in writing to the Bord Bia auditor to implementing corrective action within a 1 month period and must submit evidence within this period that demonstrates that each such non-compliance has been addressed.

Bord Bia reserves the right to carry out independent verification of the implementation of such corrective action.

Category 2

Processors against whom category 2 non-compliances have been raised must give an immediate undertaking in writing to the Bord Bia auditor to implement corrective action within a 3 month period for all the non-compliances and must submit evidence within this period that demonstrates that each such non-compliance has been addressed.

Where there has been more than 10 category 2 non-compliances, the situation will be treated as a category 1 non-compliance (see above).

Bord Bia reserves the right to carry out independent verification of the implementation of such corrective action.

Category 3 Non-Compliances

Failure to comply with applicable recommendations as determined by audit will be noted in the audit report and corrective/preventive actions must be implemented before the next full audit.

2.4

CERTIFICATION DECISIONS

The decision to grant, extend or remove certification of a Member of the Quality Assurance Scheme is made by the Certification Body. This decision will be made primarily on the basis of the audit findings, but other factors (such as failure to meet regulatory compliance or other food safety requirements, or previous audit history) may be taken into consideration in arriving at the certification decision.

The membership certificate must be returned to Bord Bia in the event that the Certification Body decides to withdraw the Processor certification.

2.5

APPEALS

The Processor may appeal decisions of the Certification Body in relation to certification status by writing to the Certification Body within two weeks of the date of issue of the certification decision.

The request to appeal will be acknowledged and followed up by the Certification Body.

2.6**COMPLAINTS**

The Producer may complain with regard to the audits or any other aspect of the operation of the Scheme.

All complaints must be in writing and must be addressed to the Certification Body.

All such complaints will be acknowledged and followed up.

2.7**REVISION UPDATES**

Users should note that only this latest edition now applies. When future changes occur, updates will be issued in whole or in part and the obsolete sections must be destroyed.

2.8**NOTIFICATION OF CHANGE**

In the event that the ownership, structure or management of the Processor changes, Bord Bia must be immediately informed.

2.9**USE OF THE SCHEME LOGO**

The Quality Assured Scheme Logo is a registered Trade Mark. It is the property of Bord Bia and must only be used with the Bord Bia's full knowledge and written approval. Bord Bia reserves the right to take appropriate action against companies that use the Logo without proper authorisation or without observing all the requirements of the Standard.

Bord Bia reserves the right to withdraw permission to use the Logo where evidence indicates that the requirements of the Standard are not being met.

In addition to the conditions outlined in the Processor Standard (relating to Identification and Traceability), the following conditions also apply to the use of the Logo on product:

- 1 The Logo must conform to the requirements and format as provided by Bord Bia,
- 2 The size of the Logo must be at least 25mm square when used on packaging,
- 3 The Logo must be placed in a prominent position and not be obscured in any way,
- 4 The Logo may be printed on packaging materials, incorporated in a brand label or applied as an individual sticker.
- 5 The Pigmeat Quality Assured Logo must only be reproduced from the template available from Bord Bia.
- 6 When used on packaging or documentation, the full logo must be used.

All costs in applying the Logo must be fully borne by the member.

See also requirements regarding the use of the Logo for identification (Processor Requirements, Section 3.14).

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3 Processor Requirements

Processor Requirements

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Management Responsibility

3.1

QUALITY AND HYGIENE POLICY STATEMENTS

Quality Policy

- a) Processors must have a Quality Policy, which must include a commitment to the objectives of the Bord Bia Pigmeat Quality Assurance Scheme and to complying with all current food safety, regulatory and customer requirements.
- b) The Quality Policy must be approved by senior management and prominently displayed on the premises.
- c) All staff must be aware of the location of the Quality Policy.
- d) *The Quality Policy should include a commitment to Continual Improvement, Safety in the Workplace, and to providing appropriate information, training and equipment for all employees.*
- e) *The Quality Policy should be communicated, understood and implemented by all staff and employees.*
- f) *The Quality Policy should be regularly reviewed for suitability and effectiveness.*

Hygiene Policy

- g) Management must document and publish on-site its Hygiene Policy, including a reference to visitors.

3.2

ORGANISATION

Management Responsibility

- a) An organisation chart must be available showing the reporting structure.
- b) The commitment of senior management to the effective implementation of the requirements of this Standard must be clearly demonstrated and communicated.
- c) The responsibility, authority and interrelationship of key personnel must be documented.

- d) Management must be able to demonstrate an adequate level of technical support with appropriate qualifications and other resources for the effective implementation of the Standard.
- e) Management must define the person(s) that has responsibility for:
 - i Ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements (see Appendix 1: Reference Information) and compliance with the requirements of this Standard,
 - ii Non-conforming product management,
 - iii Corrective and preventive action management,
 - iv Food safety (who ideally should be independent of the production function).
- f) Management must define the person(s) who is responsible for ensuring compliance with the hygiene requirements and must establish an acceptable system to demonstrate that the requirements are being met.

Management Representative

- g) The Processor must officially identify in writing to Bord Bia the Management Representative and the Deputy Management representative who, irrespective of other responsibilities, have responsibility for ensuring that the requirements of the Pigmeat Quality Assurance Standard are met.
- h) In the event of the Management Representative being changed, Bord Bia must be immediately notified in writing.

3.3

QUALITY SYSTEM

Quality Documentation

- a) Processors must document their own Quality System, which must address the requirements of this Standard and their interaction with other parts of the Quality System.
- b) This Quality System must consist of documentation that details the Processor's response to each requirement of this Standard and includes or references related operational documents, procedures and plans.

- c) The Quality System documentation (such as Hygiene procedures, work instructions, procedures, specifications, etc.) must be accessible so that all employees clearly understand their roles and responsibilities in the operation of the process.
- d) The Quality System must incorporate the Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs) identified by DAF (See Appendix 3, Meat Plant SOPs).

Quality Assurance Control Plan

- e) Processors must document (such as by flow-chart) how the process is managed to ensure the quality and safety of the product.
- f) Documentation must be available that demonstrates that the essential “Pre-requisite” requirements of Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) and Good Hygiene Practice (GHP) have been adequately addressed at all appropriate steps including procurement in accordance with Appendix 3, Meat Plant SOPs.

Document and Data Control

It is recommended that the requirements for document and data control as outlined in ISO9001: 2000 be adopted.

- g) All documents and data (including relevant external documentation such as this Standard and customer and regulatory documentation) that relate to the requirements of this Standard must be managed and controlled as part of the Quality Management System. At a minimum, the Processor must ensure that:
 - i Only current issues of all documents are available for use,
 - ii All documents are authorised,
 - iii A procedure for issue of new documents, or amending existing documents, or removal of obsolete documents is in place and is effective,
 - iv Data is reviewed and signed off by an authorised person,
 - v A master list of documents and procedures exists identifying the current revisions status,
 - vi Applicable documents of external origin are identified and effectively controlled.

- h) This Standard is subject to document control. When revisions are deemed necessary and issued by Bord Bia, it is the responsibility of the Processor to ensure that their Standard is correctly updated (See Scheme Regulations 2.7).

Records

- i) All records must be controlled (e.g. by signing and dating) and must be maintained at a secure and easily accessible location for a minimum period of three years unless otherwise specified.

Improvement Plans

- j) Processors must carry out an analysis of current and future market requirements including those of a regulatory nature, audit reports, customer complaints and incidences of non-conformance for the purposes of identifying preventative or corrective action. This can be included in the Management Review (see also Section 3.4).
- k) *Management and key operational staff should be familiar with the tools and techniques of Total Quality Management/Continual Improvement.*

3.4

MANAGEMENT REVIEW

- a) Management, which must include senior Management, must meet at least once each year with a clearly defined agenda to:
 - i) Review the complete Quality System for improvement opportunities,
 - ii) Ensure that all aspects of the Quality System as specified in these requirements remain suitable and effective, and that preventive or corrective actions are assigned, documented and implemented (See also 3.18-3.21),
 - iii) Review all Quality System data to establish and assign responsibility for improvements including audit reports, customer complaints, customer satisfaction data, process and non-conformance data,
 - iv) Set out Quality Improvement Objectives for the next year.
- b) Minutes of this meeting must be retained.

3.5

HACCP AND GMP PLANS

Processors will be aware of the requirements for HACCP as set out in Regulation EC/178/2002 (see Appendix 1: Reference Information). The following minimum requirements apply:

- a) **The Processor must have a Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) Plan that shows how product/process safety is ensured through control and prevention (Critical).**
- b) This plan must be supported by senior Management, it must be put in place by a multidiscipline team and at least one member of this team must have received formal training in the application of HACCP Principles.
- c) **At a minimum the Hazard Control Plan must include (all Category 1):**
 - i A Flow Diagram showing all the steps of the total process,
 - ii A documented analysis of the hazards and risks at each step (chemical, microbiological and physical),
 - iii An identification of all those steps that are Control Points (CCP) (and indicated on the flow chart),
 - iv For each CCP, the limits that must be met to ensure control at this CCP is maintained,
 - v For each CCP, the monitoring (activity and frequency) required to ensure that control is maintained at this point,
 - vi For each CCP, the corrective action to be taken if a deviation occurs,
 - vii For each step and CCP, the responsibilities, procedures and records that are applicable,
 - viii **The HACCP plan must be verified/tested annually at a minimum to ensure that it is effective.**
- d) A record of the preliminary risk assessments made must be retained.
- e) The HACCP plan must be supported by the GMP and GHP Plans.

3.6

RESOURCES

Reference Information

- a) Processors should maintain up-to-date information on all developments relevant to the operation of the PQAS.
- b) The Processor should maintain a list of relevant Statutory Instruments defining regulations for processors for easy use and reference (see also Appendix 1, Reference Information).

Animal Welfare

- c) Processors that carry out slaughtering must have at least one formally trained Animal Welfare Officer responsible for ensuring maintenance of animal welfare standards and the person carrying out slaughtering must hold a current licence.

Training

Note: It is a legal requirement that operatives are trained in their duties.

- d) The person with overall responsibility for training must be identified.
- e) Processors must carry out a review at least annually to identify the training needs of all staff and to verify the effectiveness of the training given.
- f) **All operational staff, including maintenance staff must receive induction and on-going food hygiene and HACCP training and records of this must be maintained (Category 1).**
- g) Training records must be maintained for all personnel performing key tasks.

Note: Specific training requirements are detailed where relevant in the requirements elsewhere in this Standard.

Process Management

3.7

CUSTOMER REQUIREMENTS

Product and Process Design and Development

- a) Processors must be able to demonstrate that relevant regulatory and customer requirements incorporating HACCP principles have been taken into account in the design of new products and processes.
- b) Where the shelf-life of products needs to be defined, a process for establishing it must be documented and validated under ideal and any predictable conditions of use and records maintained.
- c) The Processor must maintain a schedule for monitoring and review of the shelf life of products.

Customer List and Specifications

- d) **Processors must maintain a record/list of all (All Category 1):**
 - i **Customers to whom Quality Assured product is being supplied,**
 - ii **Products being marketed under the Quality Assurance Scheme,**
 - iii **Products being marketed using the Quality Assured logo.**
- e) The Customer list and all agreed contracts must be reviewed at least once each year.
- f) A documented specification must be maintained for each product supplied to each customer under the PQAS and each specification must comply with the parameters detailed in Appendix 2, Compositional Product Parameters.
- g) There must be a procedure to ensure that contracts are reviewed prior to acceptance to determine that all requirements including documentation can be met prior to acceptance.

3.8

PURCHASING, SUPPLIER AND MATERIALS CONTROLS

General

- a) Processors must maintain a list of suppliers that have been approved to supply materials or services that could affect product quality or safety.
- b) The process of approving suppliers prior to purchasing materials that come in contact with the product must include an appropriate risk assessment and must define appropriate controls.

- c) All approved supplier lists must be reviewed at defined intervals to maintain accuracy of the information and this review must include a risk assessment analysis.
- d) All materials that could affect product quality or safety must be checked and approved before use. A record of these approvals must be maintained.
- e) The storage of all materials that could affect product quality or safety must be managed in a way that ensures continuing fitness for purpose.
- f) All materials must be stored on site and used in a manner that prevents chemical, physical or microbiological contamination of product.

Pig Producer (Farm Supplier)

- g) **Records must be available to demonstrate that Pigmeat to be marketed under the Scheme was only sourced from Producers or Processors who have been certified under the PQAS (Critical).**
- h) A documented check must be carried out on all incoming pigs in accordance with the Quality Assurance Control Plan Section 3.3 and Inspection and Testing Section 3.19.
- i) Processors must have a documented programme for detection of chemo-therapeutics that has been devised in conjunction with the resident Veterinary Inspector and included in the HACCP plan.
- j) The Processor must notify the Producer in writing of incidences of bruised pigs, dirty pigs, stressed pigs (PSE/DFD), slap mark legibility, and broken needles.

Animal Pre-selection

- k) Processors must provide suitable facilities for conducting the ante-mortem inspection (ref Appendix 3, Meat Plant SOPs).

Water

- l) **All water, steam or ice (that can come in contact with the product) must be potable and meet the requirements of the EC (Drinking Water) Regulations (as amended or updated) (S.I. 439 of 2000) (Category 1).**

- m) **A sample of water must be tested at least monthly (at a minimum for the parameters described below) and the results retained. The samples must be taken from multiple sites by trained personnel (Category 1).**
- n) **In the event that the source of the water is changed at any time, the new source must be tested for compliance and approved before use (Category 1).**
- o) Microbiological analysis of the water must comply with the following at a minimum:

TVC @22°C	<100 per ml
TVC @37°C	< 10 per ml
Total Coliforms	0 per 100ml
Ecoli	0 per 100ml

If there is a failure, appropriate corrective action must be taken and documented.

- p) Non-potable water is not permitted in the plant except where dedicated pipes are used and the Non-Potable water pipes are clearly distinguished from Potable pipes to prevent inadvertent use.
- q) Where chlorination is installed, the dosing system must incorporate an alarm device and the level in use must be agreed by the resident Veterinary Inspector on site.
- r) There must be measurement of residual chlorine in treated water at least twice daily and records retained.
- s) If alternative disinfection systems are used (e.g. Ozonation, membrane filtration etc.) these must be designed so that operators can easily determine that they are operating effectively.
- t) A documented programme must be in place to prevent organic matter build up in tanks (e.g. Drain the system annually, use a cleaner/sanitiser to clean the storage tanks etc., then flush with clean water) and a record maintained of this activity.
- u) There must be a water distribution system map or drawing, showing, source, storage, hot and cold distribution in the plant and the locations of the sampling points.

- v) Storage tanks must conform to the following specification:
 - i) Manufactured from inert material,
 - ii) Covered and fitted with an inspection hatch,
 - iii) Water inlet at the top of the tank (to prevent sediment disturbance),
 - iv) Water outlet at the bottom of the tank,
 - v) Fitted with screened vent pipes.

Detergents and Sanitising Materials

- w) The Processor must have on file current certificates of suitability for use in meat processing for soaps, detergents, marking inks, lubricants and packaging materials.
- x) All such materials and chemicals must be stored in a manner that permits control over their use.
- y) All such materials must be inspected on delivery to ensure suitability for use in the plant (correct labelling, integrity of packaging, correct specification, etc.).

3.9

ANIMAL WELFARE

Animal Welfare and Lairage

- a) Lairage and slaughter staff must demonstrate competence and compassion in their handling of pigs.
- b) All lairage staff must have received training in the handling of pigs by a formally trained animal welfare officer in consultation with the resident Veterinary Inspectors and a record maintained.
- c) Lairages must be included in the plant cleaning and sanitation programme.
- d) Staff member(s) with defined responsibility for lairage management must be available to oversee the unloading and the subsequent passage of animals through the lairage to the point of stunning and slaughter.

(See also the requirement for a formally trained animal welfare officer specified in 3.6 above.)

- e) Animals must be unloaded with care in a calm unhurried manner using a system designed to prevent injury and stress (e.g. utilising walkways of less than 20 degrees slope) and allowed a 2 hour rest period in the lairage,
- f) Goads must only be used as a last resort when the animal refuses to move. They may only be used on hindquarters, for a 2 sec maximum duration and only when the animal is free to move forward.
- g) The lairage must be covered to provide protection for the animals from inclement weather conditions and must be ventilated.
- h) The walls, floors and pens must be strong, durable, free of sharp edges that could cause injury and the floors must be made of non-slip material.
- i) Lairage surfaces must be designed to be easy to maintain and clean.
- j) Water from a potable supply must be supplied to the drinking points/nipples in all pens and be available at all times.
- k) The stocking densities in the lairage pens must be maintained at a level that will prevent stress and injury while allowing movement of the pigs.
- l) All drains must be trapped and securely gridded.
- m) Lighting must be available for inspection at convenient points, but live pigs must not be exposed to continuous bright artificial light.
- n) *Animals entering the abattoir should, where possible, be maintained and penned in the groups in which they have been transported.*
- o) A designated DAF approved detention pen must be provided.
- p) Fractious and excitable stock must be penned separately.
- q) *Livestock have sensitive hearing and are stressed by excessive noise and therefore, noise should be minimised. Factors to consider are:*
 - i) *Fitting gate strike posts with rubber stops,*
 - ii) *Piping air exhausts (on pneumatically powered gates) outside,*
 - iii) *Locating the motor and pump away from the pigs, where hydraulics are used to power gates.*

Stunning

- r) The movement of animals along the approach race towards the stunning pen must be calm and unimpeded with physical stress to the animal kept to the minimum.

- s) *Lighting should encourage animals to move forward from subdued lighting in the approach race to the brighter stunning area.*
- t) The approach race must be designed and constructed to prevent pigs from being distracted by what is happening outside the race.
- u) *There should be an exit facility immediately prior to the stunning area to enable pigs to return to the lairage if required.*
- v) All animals must be stunned in DAF approved stunning pens, using DAF approved stunning methods. Stunning pens must be:
 - i) Designed to avoid noise and distress or injury to the animal,
 - ii) Well lit and accessible to allow inspection of stunning and slaughter to take place,
 - iii) Maintained in good condition.
- w) Stunning techniques must be effective and routinely checked by the animal welfare officer/resident Veterinary Inspector as demonstrated by records of inspection.
- x) The daily maintenance of stunning equipment must be documented.
- y) There must be a procedure to ensure that casualty animals are slaughtered humanely by trained operatives as soon as possible after arrival at the slaughter plant.
- z) Stun to stick times must not exceed the accepted welfare limits.

3.10

ANIMAL TRANSPORT AND ANIMAL RECEIPTS

- a) **Processors must have a documented procedure for the approval of pig hauliers and maintain a list of the approved hauliers (that are not Producers own transport) (Category 1).**
- b) A register must be maintained showing that the approved hauliers have received and signed for a copy of a pig transport code of practice (e.g. the Pig Haulier Code of Practice published by Bord Bia, or the DAF Pig Welfare Requirements on Farm and In Transit, or equivalent).
- c) Processors must inspect all transport vehicles using a checklist based on these guideline documents on a planned basis.¹

¹ DAF personnel use a special form for the inspection of vehicles and a copy of this can be made available on request.

- d) **A record of every delivery of animals for slaughter to the factory must be maintained showing at a minimum (all Category 1):**
 - i **Delivery truck registration number,**
 - ii **Haulier and/or driver name,**
 - iii **Number of pigs in the delivery,**
 - iv **Time of collection and delivery,**
 - v **Delivery information that will allow traceability of all animals to PQAS certified Producer farms.**

3.11

PROCESSING

Carcase Selection

- a) The carcasses must be classified/graded according to clearly documented procedures and records must be maintained to show that these procedures are operated.
- b) In the event that the carcass is regraded, the amended documentation must be signed by a staff member with responsibility for this activity.

Carcass Dressing

- c) Procedures for dressing carcasses must be in place to prevent cross-contamination (such as from: hide or un-sanitised equipment or surfaces; digestive tract contents spillage; contaminated personal equipment or clothing; other un-inspected carcasses).
- d) Dressing must be done immediately after slaughter and in a hygienic manner appropriate for food intended for human consumption.
- e) Dressing techniques must minimise transfer of microorganisms from the carcass surface to the meat.
- f) Task descriptions must be documented for each dressing operation to ensure operatives carry out their tasks hygienically and consistently.
- g) Dressing operations must be supervised, and the slaughter line speeds adjusted where necessary to ensure hygienic operator activity.
- h) Where contamination occurs, the carcass must be segregated and returned to the resident Veterinary Inspector for decision on subsequent action (sanitise, condemn, etc.).

- i) A two-knife technique must be used for all tasks that involve opening of the carcass and these knives must be colour coded.
- j) *All carcass cuts should be "in out" or spear cut (i.e. blade cutting away from carcass) with the exceptions of the initial opening at the hock.*
- k) The technique used to open the abdomen must minimise the possibility of cutting into the stomach and intestines. During evisceration, the bung must be bagged.
- l) Where pigs are considered likely to present biological hazards the following regime must be employed:
 - i) They must be slaughtered last,
 - ii) Livers must be removed with intact gall-bladder and must not enter the food chain,
 - iii) Line speeds must be reduced to facilitate hygienic carcass dressing unless evidence is available that demonstrates that this is not required.
- m) Adequate demarcation between edible and inedible products must be maintained during production through the provision of clearly marked bins for each status of product.
- n) There must be a documented procedure to address accidental spillage of gut contents or to address soiling of the carcass in the event that it falls off the line.

Chilling Regime

- o) Carcasses must be cooled so that the temperature falls below 7°C within 24 hours of slaughter. Records of cooling rate must be maintained and available for inspection.
- p) Chills must have proper functioning refrigeration that ensures an even airflow and thermographs must be maintained and made available for inspection.
- q) *Carcasses should be positioned within the chill so that they are not exposed to excessive cold air and to ensure air can circulate (e.g. not placed in front of fans which could cause cold shortening).*
- r) Carcasses entering the boning hall must have a temperature of 7°C or less.

3.12

BONE IN AND BONELESS MEAT

Where supplies of Bone-In or Boneless pigmeats are purchased for processing and are intended to be marketed under the PQAS, the following requirements apply:

- a) **The pigmeat² must be sourced from a Processor certified under the PQAS and must be accompanied by the Bord Bia Dispatch Record or equivalent (Category 1).**
- b) **The Processor must be able to demonstrate full traceability between product dispatched for marketing under the Scheme and the source material used in that shipment (Category 1).**
- c) Each consignment must be examined on delivery and records maintained to demonstrate:
 - i Compliance with a written product specification,
 - ii Freedom from visible contamination or foreign bodies,
 - iii That the product has been refrigerated in accordance with the temperature requirements in Section 3.15.

3.13

FINAL PRODUCT RELEASE

Positive Release

- a) **All meat products must be inspected and positively released for dispatch according to a documented inspection procedure that specifies the frequency of the tests required (including any specific tests required by customers) (Category 1).**
- b) The personnel with responsibility and authority for final product approval and release must be identified in the procedure and the approval/release must be documented.
- c) This inspection must ensure that all product is:
 - i Free from visible contamination before final inspection,
 - ii Meets internal and customer requirements for quality and safety,
 - iii Meets the Compositional Parameters in Appendix 2,
 - iv Meets the Product Dispatch Standards in Appendix 4.

² As defined in Scheme Regulations, Eligible Meat Products, Section 2.1.1.

Metal Detection

- d) Where there is a HACCP or customer requirement, all products must be passed through a metal detector.
- e) Detectors must be set for optimum sensitivity for the product consistent with customer requirements and incorporate an alarm to signify the presence of metal (ferrous and non-ferrous).
- f) A schedule of testing of the effectiveness of the metal detection system must be in place.
- g) A corrective action procedure must be documented to deal with failures of the metal detection equipment.

3.14

PRODUCT IDENTIFICATION AND TRACEABILITY

- a) Processors must have in place an identification and traceability procedure that permits full traceability along the supply chain to the farm(s) of origin (Critical).
- b) Product marketed under the PQAS must be clearly marked with Processor Identification and Traceability Codes, and the Quality Assured Logo where required (Critical).
- c) The use of the Bord Bia Quality Assured Logo must be in accordance with the requirements set out in Scheme Regulations, Section 2.9 (Category 1).

3.15

PROCESSING, STORAGE, DISPATCH AND TRANSPORT

The following table summarises the processing and storage room temperature requirements:

Area/Product	Storage Requirement
Production Rooms	12°C or Colder
Chilled Bone-in Storage	5°C or Colder
Chilled Vac-Pack/MAP Meat	5°C or colder
Frozen Meat	-12°C or Colder
Transit Temperature: Chilled	0°C +/- 2°C
Transit Temperature: Frozen	-12°C or colder as stipulated by customer contract

- a) All temperature-controlled areas must be constantly monitored (and ideally alarmed) and a permanent record available of the temperatures demonstrating compliance with the processing and storage room temperature requirements above.
- b) There must be a procedure for defining and documenting the corrective action taken to address temperature non-conformances observed in these systems.
- c) There must be a procedure in place for the identification and segregation of non-conforming product during storage.

Storage

- d) **Product intended to be marketed under the PQAS must be clearly identifiable (such as by segregation, clear labelling) in storage (Category 1).**
- e) *Quality Assured product lots/batches should not be mixed with other non-assured product on pallets, racks etc. to avoid possible confusion.*
- f) All personnel involved with product storage and dispatch areas must have documented training relevant to this task (see also Training in Section 3.6 above).
- g) All product (including in-process product, packaging products, etc.) must be stored to ensure it is protected from damage or contamination.

Dispatch and Transport

Note: It is the responsibility of the processor and the transporter to ensure that the cold chain is maintained during loading and transport and is appropriate to the product.

- h) **A record of the following checks must be maintained (All Category 1):**
 - i **All transport vehicles must be inspected prior to loading to ensure they are clean, waterproof and undamaged; that door seals and air circulation ducts are intact; and that the refrigeration unit is working properly,**
 - ii **Containers must be checked to ensure that they are pre-cooled prior to loading,**
 - iii **Product temperature must be checked prior to loading.**

- i) Records must be maintained to demonstrate the effectiveness of temperature control appropriate to the product during transit.
- j) A contingency plan must be in place to deal with refrigerated delivery breakdown.

Packaging Materials

- k) A certificate of suitability/conformance must be available for all packaging materials that come into contact with the product.
- l) Documentation must be available that demonstrates that materials used in packaging that are intended to come in contact with food are traceable at all stages of production.

3.16

CONTROL OF NON-CONFORMING PRODUCT

- a) **There must be a documented procedure to ensure that product/material at any stage, which does not conform to requirements, is prevented from unintended use or release (Category 1).**
- b) The procedure must provide for clear identification, adequate segregation and final disposition of the nonconforming product and records of such disposition must be maintained.
- c) Incidents with a potential to cause a food safety hazard (e.g. failure of the metal detection system) must be recorded and reported in writing to the person responsible (as defined in Section 3.2).
- d) The disposition must only be conducted in a manner that permits full traceability and must only be authorised by the personnel specified in Section 3.2. Disposition can include:
 - i Reworking to meet requirements,
 - ii Acceptance with or without reworking by agreed concession from the customer,
 - iii Re-grading, including where necessary re-labelling, for alternative use to which it fully conforms,
 - iv Rejection and destruction.
- e) *In the event of a breakdown in the Quality or HACCP controls, a review of the relevant SOP(s) should be conducted immediately and appropriate corrective actions taken.*

3.17

**SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS
FOR CONSUMER PACK MINCE MEAT**

- a) Mince must not be produced from:
 - i Mechanically recovered meat,
 - ii Scrap cuttings/trimmings,
 - iii Condemned meat,
 - iv Head meat with the exception of the masseter muscle,
 - v Carpus, tarsus and bone scrapings.
- b) Meat, from which mince is obtained, must not have been stored frozen for more than 18 months and this must be demonstrated by records.
- c) During mincing the internal temperature of the meat must be monitored and must meet the following criteria:
 - i < 7°C if mincing is completed in less than 1 hour, but < 4°C ideally,
 - ii < 4°C if mincing is NOT completed in 1 hour.
- d) Staff involved in mincing meat must wear mouth and nose masks (and gloves if required by the authorised officer).
- e) Mince may only be deep frozen once.

Measurement and Improvement

3.18

INTERNAL AUDITS

- a) Processors must establish documented procedures for the scheduling, planning and the implementation of internal audits to verify internal compliance with the requirements of the Standard and the effectiveness of the Quality System, records and procedures.

Note: Responsibility for reporting critical non-compliances in Management Responsibility in Section 3.2 above).

- b) All corrective and preventive actions defined in these audits must be assigned and tracked until completed by the target completion dates.
- c) The records of such audits must be available for inspection.
- d) Internal auditors must have received formal training in the requirements of the Standard.
- e) *Internal auditors should be independent of the activity being audited and should have received formal training in auditing skills.*

3.19

INSPECTION AND TESTING

General

- a) Processors must document the procedures, methods and frequencies for all inspection and testing as detailed in the Quality Assurance/ Hazard Control Plan and maintain appropriate records.
- b) Where the Processor operates a laboratory, the competence of the laboratory staff must be demonstrated (e.g. through training records, certifications etc.).
- c) The suitability, effectiveness and accuracy of the test methods must be demonstrated (e.g. by reference to industry norms or other standard test methodologies and by laboratory test validation).
- d) Where testing on regulatory parameters is outsourced, the Processor must only use DAF approved Laboratories.
- e) *Where other testing is outsourced, the Processor should only use laboratories that are independently accredited to ISO 17025 (See Reference Information, Appendix 1).*
- f) All measurement systems must be capable of complying with regulatory requirements for accuracy.
- g) **Processors must have in place a salmonella testing programme that complies with the current regulatory testing requirements (Critical).**

Bacteriological Tests on Pigmeat

Processors will be aware of the necessity to maintain, monitor and verify hygiene standards. Processors will already appreciate the usefulness of testing the hygienic quality of the Pigmeat using the Total Viable Count (TVC) method. Processors will also be aware of the relevant Hygiene regulations, limits applicable to meat and the sampling procedures as recommended by Teagasc (see Appendix 1: Reference Information). The following additional requirements of this Standard apply:

- h) Sampling and testing must be done in accordance with recognised methods and current regulatory requirements and the data maintained.
- i) In the event that the levels are exceeded, Processors must take effective corrective action.
- j) Samples must be taken according to a plan and analysed to ensure product hygiene is maintained.
- k) Bacteriological tests may be carried out in the plant laboratory provided laboratory personnel are suitably qualified and competent in microbiological methods and test equipment is suitable.
- l) The laboratory must not have direct access to the plant and access to the laboratory must be controlled.

Note: Data from other tests (such as microbiological results when available) should be analysed for trends and to indicate the appropriate corrective action.

Residue Testing

- m) **The Processor must have a residue and chemotherapeutic programme and schedule in place for pigs from eligible farmers that complies with the DAF National Residues Monitoring Programme and evidence demonstrating that this programme is in operation and effective must be maintained (Category 1).**
- n) Where customers require specific residue tests, these must be documented and results maintained.
- o) **The Processor must have a procedure in place that defines the actions to be taken in the event that a carcass fails a residue test. This procedure must be agreed by the resident Veterinary Inspector and include at a minimum (all Category 1):**
 - i **Immediate notification in writing of DAF and the Producer,**

- ii **Initiation of the recall/withdrawal procedure for the affected product with subsequent disposition in accordance with resident Veterinary Inspector instruction.**

Dispatch Inspection: Carcasses

- p) Records must be available to demonstrate that, prior to boning or dispatch, all carcasses have been checked according to a plan that includes at a minimum:
 - i Carcase temperature is 7°C or less,
 - ii Other specified checks as part of HACCP and Quality Assurance Control Plans.
- q) All product must be positively released.

Dispatch Inspection: Boneless Product

- r) Records must be available to demonstrate that, prior to dispatch, all boneless product has been checked according to a plan that includes at a minimum:
 - i Vacuum packs seals are air tight,
 - ii That cartons and trays, where used, are undamaged,
 - iii That product was passed through a metal detector.
- s) All product must be positively released.

3.20

CONTROL OF INSPECTION, MEASURING AND TEST EQUIPMENT

Processors will be aware of the need to document the procedures used to control, calibrate and maintain inspection, measuring and test equipment. The following specific requirements apply:

- a) A register of all such equipment must be maintained which includes:
 - i Identity/location,
 - ii Operating range,
 - iii Tolerance and accuracy required,
 - iv Calibration frequency and responsibility,
 - v Calibration method or reference,
 - vi Operational checking (e.g. start-up checks) to ensure continuing accuracy.

- b) Records of all calibrations with traceability to National Standards must be maintained.
- c) When a device was found to be out of calibration, an assessment of the validity of previous inspection results, the likely impacts and the appropriate corrective and preventive actions must be carried out and recorded.

3.21

IMPROVEMENT

Corrective and Preventive Action

- a) There must be a documented and effective procedure for corrective and preventive action management.
- b) Corrective and preventive actions must be tracked until resolved and their priorities appropriately identified (e.g. by means of defined time scales for completion).

Customer Complaints

- c) Processors must establish an effective procedure for handling of customer complaints, including any of regulatory origin.
- d) The procedures must clearly outline responsibilities for logging, tracking and closing off complaints in conjunction with the complainant.
- e) The complaint log and related correspondence must be maintained and be available for inspection.
- f) Food safety related customer complaints must be notified to the resident Veterinary Inspector.

Product Recall

- g) Processors must document and establish an effective product recall procedure.
- h) For critical food safety related issues, the recall procedure must also include a provision to inform the regulatory authorities (FSAI and DAF).
- i) Documentation must be maintained to demonstrate that the recall procedure was tested annually for effectiveness.

General Hygiene and GMP

The FSAI has published useful guidance notes that are specific to slaughter plants (especially Guidance Note 8 listed in Appendix 1) that could be applied to pigmeat Processors. These guidelines could be considered for incorporation into the Hygiene, GMP and GHP practices of the pigmeat processor. These indicate among other things, the need for Management to:

- Ensure that the premises and plant is designed, constructed and maintained to prevent and control the risk of contamination and comply with all relevant legislation pertaining to food safety,
- Have a Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) plan which complies with the Hygiene and GMP Requirements as set out below and which supports the HACCP plan,
- Be able to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the Meat Plant SOPs (see Appendix 3).

The requirements listed below define the essential management procedures necessary to implement hygiene/GMP in accordance with the PQAS. However, compliance with these requirements does not in any way lessen the responsibility on Processors to conform to existing statutory requirements.

3.22

PLANT AND FACILITIES

Site Security and Visitors

- a) Processors must ensure that site security is maintained to prevent possible product contamination.
- b) Management must document how visitors are managed to minimise risk to product.

Process Flow and Laboratories

- c) *Process flow and traffic should be arranged to prevent product contamination.*
- d) *Laboratories on-site should be located and operated to prevent product contamination.*

Cleaning and Sanitation

- e) **Processors must document and implement a comprehensive plant, facilities and equipment cleaning and sanitation programme and this must be in accordance with the Meat Plant SOPs (see Appendix 3) (Category 1).**
- f) This programme must cover all food contact surfaces and the exterior and interior of the plant including at a minimum: walls, floors, windows, drains, machines, equipment (e.g. knives, sterilisers, trays), food surfaces (e.g. conveyors), facilities, and ancillary structures including ventilation ducts, stores and the lairage.
- g) Processors must adopt a “clean as you go approach” throughout the operation and must document, monitor and record the cleaning activities and must:
 - i) State the method of cleaning, the responsible personnel, the frequency with which each item or group of items is cleaned and the materials used,
 - ii) State the frequency and method of cleaning (including safety hazards) required to ensure that the appropriate surfaces are visually clean and then sanitised.
- h) **A designated person must verify the effectiveness of cleaning prior to allowing production to commence (Category 1).**
- i) **Where cleaning is done by a subcontractor, a contract with full specification must be in place (Category 1).**
- j) Records verifying the effectiveness of the cleaning programme (such as microbial swabbing or rapid hygiene tests) must be maintained.

Pest Control

- k) **Processors must implement a formal pest control programme and all baiting materials must be certified by the pest control contractor/ manufacturer as appropriate for the particular use (Category 1).**
- l) An annual review of the programme must be conducted to establish its suitability and effectiveness.
- m) Where baiting supplies are stored on site, the store must be kept locked.

- n) All bait stations and electronic fly killing (EFK) units must be secured, numbered and clearly indicated on a site map.
- o) Inspections for pest control must be made and recorded (minimum 8 visits per year) by an independent contractor.
- p) All air vents and intake points must be covered with 1.2 mm screens/meshes to prevent pest ingress.
- q) *There should be a multi-level baiting system such as:*
 - i *1st line of defence: Perimeter with bait points at 6-8m intervals along the entire perimeter,*
 - ii *Second line of defence: along factory building wall,*
 - iii *Third line of defence: internally where there is a risk of rodent ingress.*

3.23

MAINTENANCE

- a) A preventive maintenance programme for essential plant and equipment affecting product quality/safety must be in place (See Appendix 3, Meat Plant SOPs).
- b) Maintenance schedules and procedures must be documented.
- c) All internal maintenance staff must receive training in hygiene.
- d) All external maintenance personnel must be made aware of the company hygiene regulations prior to commencing work.
- e) Maintenance procedures must indicate the precautions taken to ensure that the product is not contaminated in any way by the maintenance activity whether carried out by own or contracted staff.
- f) A record of maintenance activities must be maintained.
- g) There must be procedure to approve equipment for re-use after maintenance is complete.
- h) *A system for accountability for tools used and equipment parts removed during maintenance should be developed and implemented.*

Environmental Hygiene

3.24

BREAKABLES

Processors will appreciate that the structure and fabrication of the premises and the supply of services must be such as to prevent contamination. The following specific requirements apply:

- a) Wood structures, pallets and fittings are not permitted in any food production area.
- b) A glass/hard plastics policy and written procedures for handling glass/hard plastics breakages in all process and storage areas must be in place.
- c) Where glass/hard plastics are present a glass/hard plastics register must be maintained.

3.25

EXTERIOR, STRUCTURE AND GROUNDS

It is important that the grounds and all areas of the premises are well presented and maintained to minimise sources of contamination. The following specific requirements apply:

- a) A perimeter fence, wall, or other suitable physical demarcation must protect access to the grounds.
- b) Equipment, pallets and other materials stored in the factory grounds must be stored neatly and in clearly defined areas.
- c) Any unused buildings, service buildings etc. must be maintained in good repair and free from debris.
- d) There must be a clearance of one metre wide around the factory to avoid rodent infestation.
- e) Exterior finish of the premises must be maintained in sound condition (i.e. no flaking paint or broken plaster).
- f) The grounds must be kept free of faecal matter and there must be no stagnant water, potholes, open drains or pools.
- g) Roofs, valleys and gutters must be maintained in good repair and free from debris and weeds.

3.26**INTERIORS: GENERAL**

- a) All pipes, pipe work, lagging, electrical cables etc. must be clean, secure and properly constructed.
- b) A schedule of internal washing and sanitation must be in operation (see also Section 3.22).

3.27**ENTRY TO PRODUCTION**

- a) A procedure must be in place to ensure good hygiene practices at entry and exit from all production areas (i.e. hygiene barriers, protective clothing and footwear changing).
- b) Wash-hand basins and footwear cleaning facilities must be provided at all entry points to production areas.
- c) Taps must be knee, foot, arm or electronically operated.
- d) Paper towel dispensers and receptacles must be in place.
- e) Odourless hand sanitising solutions must be provided at each hand washing point.
- f) *Hand-washing water should be ideally premixed to 44°C.*
- g) Where foot baths are provided, these must be located outside production areas and must be designed to ensure adequate contact with footwear and to allow footwear to drain after use.
- h) Where foot baths are provided a procedure must be in place to ensure that the disinfecting solution remains at a working strength at all times.

3.28**INTERIOR WALLS**

- a) Wall surfaces must be designed and constructed to be durable, smooth, light coloured, easily cleaned and impermeable to liquids.
- b) They must be maintained in a clean condition, free from cobwebs and moulds, etc.
- c) Junctions and joints must be smooth and impervious.
- d) Wall-to-floor junctions must be coved.

- e) Ledges and sills must be sloped and kept free from dust, dirt or other miscellaneous items.
- f) Walls must be well maintained, e.g. no flaking paint or plaster, no damaged or missing tiles, all tile cracks sealed or grouted.

3.29

CEILINGS AND OVERHEADS

- a) Ceilings must be designed and constructed to be of sufficient height, smooth, light coloured and easily cleaned.
- b) All joints must be sealed and impermeable.
- c) Ceilings must be maintained in good repair, clean and be free of condensation.
- d) False or cavity ceilings must have access to the void above to enable cleaning and inspection.
- e) Girders and overhead pipe-work and structures must be clean and free from rust, dust, mould growth, flaking paint and other extraneous material.
- f) Skylights are undesirable, but where present they must be clean and be fitted with fly screens if openable.

3.30

FLOORS

- a) Floors must be constructed of durable, non-slip, water resistant material and be maintained in good condition (i.e. no holes or cracks).
- b) Floors must be kept clean and free from the accumulation of water or debris especially in corners or in areas hidden by machinery.
- c) Rubber mats or plastic meshes, where used, must be easily removed and easily cleaned.

3.31

DRAINAGE

- a) Drainage must be such as to prevent risk of contamination.
- b) All floors must be sloped towards the drainage channels so that stagnant pools of liquid are prevented.
- c) Drainage channels, which cross personnel working areas and passageways, must be covered with removable covers for cleaning accessibility.

- d) Fat and debris traps and grids must be fitted to all drains as specified in the legislation.
- e) *Drainage from on-site laboratories should be designed to exit the building before joining up with other waste systems.*
- f) Where manholes are present inside the premises they must be doubly sealed.

3.32

DOORS

- a) Doors and doorframes must be constructed of durable impermeable material that is tight fitting and with a smooth easily cleaned finish.
- b) Glass must not be used in doors opening into storage or production areas. Other clear shatterproof material may be used instead.
- c) All external doors and internal doors (excluding emergency doors) leading from non-process into process areas must be self-closing or otherwise screened to prevent pest ingress.
- d) All chill and freezer doors must be openable from both sides.

3.33

WINDOWS

- a) Windows opening to the exterior in production areas must be at least two meters above ground, must have sloping ledges and, if opening, must be fitted with suitable and effective fly-screens.
- b) Windows must be constructed of shatterproof material or, if made of glass or hard plastic, must be laminated to prevent shattering.
- c) Windows and window frames must be tight fitting, maintained in good condition, free from cracks, moulds, flaking paint etc. and must be clean.

3.34

LIGHTING

- a) Lighting in production areas, must be designed to be permanently fixed, easily cleaned and must be protected by shatterproof covering.
- b) Lighting must be adequate at all times for the particular operation and must be of a type that does not distort colour where decisions are taken on the basis of colour.

- c) Minimum light intensities must be:
 - i Inspections points 540 Lux,
 - ii Work Rooms, detention pens 220 Lux,
 - iii Storage areas and lairage pens 110 Lux.

3.35

WATER AND WATER TREATMENT

- a) Water tanks must be kept covered.
- b) Where the water supply is derived from well(s), the well-head(s) must be designed and the area around the well-head(s) maintained to prevent contamination of the water.

(See also additional requirements regarding water Section 3.8 above.)

3.36

KNIVES, STERILISERS, HOSES AND OTHER EQUIPMENT

- a) Knife and equipment sterilisers must be designed and constructed to be rust proof and to ensure complete immersion of the knife's blade-handle junction. In abattoirs, the flow of water must be continuous with independent drainage to a floor drain.
- b) **Knife and equipment sterilisers must be kept at a minimum 82°C when in use and checked according to a defined schedule (Category 1).**
- c) **All knives and other meat contact equipment must be sterilised prior to and during their use in production (Category 1).**
- d) Sterilisers must be located in all areas where knives or similar utensils are used and must be readily accessible to staff.
- e) *Scabbards should be restricted unless their use is essential to health and safety.*
- f) *After removal from a scabbard or use of steel, a knife should be treated as contaminated and placed in a steriliser before use.*
- g) Aprons, where used, must be subjected to frequent cleaning in wash cabinets designed to minimise the risk of cross contamination.
- h) The use of drop-hoses for apron washing is not permitted.
- i) Hoses, which should ideally be completely constructed of corrosion free materials, must be maintained in a clean and tidy condition and must always be kept off the floor when not in use.

3.37**EXTRACTION AND VENTILATION**

- a) All processes that emit steam or vapours must be effectively hooded and fitted with suitable extraction equipment to prevent condensation.
- b) Suitable ventilation must be available in all process areas, where steam or water vapour arises, to prevent condensation.
- c) Vents from drains, sewers and rainwater drainpipes must not be located within the plant.

3.38**CLEANING MATERIALS**

- a) All cleaning equipment and materials, chemicals and other substances likely to contaminate product must be stored in a lockable, secure place (ideally with appropriate bunding) away from production.
- b) *Adequate safety and protective clothing, footwear and apparatus should be available when handling such substances.*

3.39**EFFLUENT TREATMENT**

- a) Any effluent treatment plant must be operated in accordance with the relevant licences.
- b) *Where an effluent treatment plant exists on site, it should be placed as far as possible down wind and away from the plant air intake points.*

3.40**FOOD TRAYS**

- a) Facilities with adequate ventilation must be provided for the washing and sanitising of food trays.
- b) At a minimum, there must be separate areas for the storage and washing of soiled trays and the storage of clean trays.
- c) In all cases cross-contamination between clean and dirty trays must be prevented.

3.41

ELECTRONIC FLY KILLING UNITS

- a) There must be a programme and records for the inspection of EFK units and for replacement of the light tubes.
- b) EFK units must be located away from food processing areas and from packaging equipment or packaging operations.
- c) EFK units must not be located close to or above exposed meat or food preparation areas.

Note: The effectiveness of EFK units is determined to a large degree by their location and working height.

3.42

WASTE MANAGEMENT AND DISPOSAL

Management will be aware of the need to ensure that wastes are defined, segregated and controlled effectively to minimise cross-contamination in the process. At a minimum, the following requirements must be met:

Waste Management General

Note: Waste Material is defined in this Standard as:

- *Non-saleable animal parts,*
 - *Inedible by-products or any part of the carcass, which is discarded, and not intended for human use (i.e. parts of the carcass not normally subjected to post-mortem inspection, etc.),*
 - *Meat declared unfit for human consumption,*
 - *Stomach parts and viscera not intended for human consumption and their contents.*
- a) **There must be a documented programme for the management of all waste material (Category 1).**
 - b) Waste materials must be controlled in the production area and must be stored in clearly identified containers pending collection/disposal (See Appendix 3, Meat Plant SOPs).
 - c) Processors must have procedures to prevent waste material coming into contact with fresh meat or carcasses which have been passed fit for human consumption.
 - d) The plant cleaning schedule must include all waste handling/storage areas.

Waste Containers

Waste containers for use internally (i.e. within the plant) must be:

- e) Clearly differentiated/identified so that they cannot be mistaken for food use containers,
- f) Clearly designated according the type of waste (with separate waste containers for High Risk material) to be disposed in them,
- g) Available at appropriate locations.

Waste Skips

Skips for waste must be:

- h) Covered at all times except when being filled and located as far as practicable from the "Clean" area,
- i) Sited on a concrete surface that ensures that any leakage is contained and safely disposed of,
- j) Emptied according to a documented schedule, and spillages cleaned up immediately.

Condemned Materials

- k) Adequate facilities for the identification and safe handling of condemned materials must be provided.
- l) The arrangements for the handling, control and disposal of condemned materials must be agreed with the resident Veterinary Inspector.
- m) Where condemned or inedible material or other wastes are removed through conveyors or chutes, these must be constructed and installed in such a way as to avoid any risk of contamination of fresh meat.
- n) Enclosed chutes must be equipped with suitable access points to facilitate inspection and sanitation.

Other Waste Material

- o) Discarded wrapping, packaging and other refuse must be placed in designated bins or skips so that it does not compromise the hygiene of the premises and does not provide a habitat for pests and vermin.

Personnel Hygiene

It is the responsibility of management to ensure that all aspects of personnel hygiene are addressed and to ensure, at a minimum, compliance with the following specific requirements.

3.43

GENERAL

- a) **An Operational Hygiene Management system that clearly sets out the Processor's policy, procedures and records relating to hygiene including personnel hygiene must be established and communicated clearly to all personnel (See also Appendix 3, Meat Plant SOPs) (Category 1).**
- b) **A documented training programme for staff must be in place (See also Appendix 3, Meat Plant SOPs) (Category 1).**
- c) Training records must be available to demonstrate that all operatives have been trained in the Operational Hygiene Management system.

3.44

PERSONNEL HEALTH

- a) Processors must have a procedure in place to ensure that no person that is likely to be a carrier of or suffering from a disease likely to be transmitted through food or that has infected wounds, skin infections, sores or diarrhoea is permitted to handle food or enter any food-handling area in any capacity.
- b) The procedure must ensure that any person so affected who is likely to come into contact with food immediately reports the illness or symptoms, and if possible their causes, to the food business operator.
- c) Processors must ensure that:
 - i Food handlers are supervised and instructed and/or trained in food hygiene matters commensurate with their work activity,
 - ii Those responsible for the development and maintenance of the HACCP system have received adequate training in the application of the HACCP principles.
- d) Personnel must be made aware of their responsibility to notify management of any infectious disease or condition they may be suffering from or have been in contact with that could adversely affect the safety of the product.

3.45

FIRST AID

- a) At least one member of staff must be trained in First Aid procedures and first aid kits that are fully stocked with materials suitable for use in food plants must be available to treat minor injuries.

3.46**PERSONAL HYGIENE**

- a) Fingernails must be kept short, clean and unvarnished.
- b) No jewellery, except plain wedding rings may be worn by personnel working in the production area.
- c) All head hair, including facial hair, must be contained (e.g. by means of a snood, mop cap or other covering) to prevent contamination of product.
- d) Operatives lifting pigmeat quarters must also wear a protective neck shield.
- e) Cuts, sores and grazes must be covered after treatment with a distinctively coloured waterproof dressing incorporating a metal detectable strip and which is supplied by the company.

3.47**PERSONNEL CLOTHING AND LOCKER ROOMS**

Protective Clothing

- a) All personnel (food operatives) working within the plant must be provided with light coloured protective clothing, suitable headgear and footwear.
- b) Personnel working in the lairage or handling animals must be provided with suitable clothing for the handling of animals and separate designated footwear.
- c) Clothing worn by personnel working in the lairage or handling live animals, must be clearly distinguishable and maintained separately from that worn by food operatives.
- d) Clean protective clothing must be issued daily or as required.
- e) Facilities (including individual lockers) must be provided that ensure the separation of street (civilian) and in-plant protective clothing.
- f) Specific arrangements that provide for the hygienic handling of used or contaminated clothing must be in place.
- g) A scheduled laundering of all protective clothing must be in place.
- h) Where work clothing is laundered on site, the wash cycle must exceed 80°C working temperature as demonstrated by records.

(See also the requirements in section 3.27 regarding a hygiene barrier.)

Shower and Washing

- i) Shower facilities must be provided.
- j) All persons entering production areas of the plant must wash their hands and sanitise their protective footwear. Notices to this effect must be posted in appropriate areas.

3.48

PERSONNEL FACILITIES INCLUDING CANTEENS

- a) Smoking, eating and drinking must only be permitted in designated areas and there must be clear signs to this effect.
- b) All personnel facilities (canteens, locker-rooms, toilets, rest-rooms) must be included in the plant sanitation programme and maintained in a clean condition.
- c) Canteens must be designed or operated to ensure separation of high and low risk workers to prevent cross-contamination (e.g. separation of people working in lairage and production areas in the canteen, or providing separate facilities to dis-robe before entering the canteen).

3.49

TOILET FACILITIES

- a) All toilets, including office toilets, must be clean and adequately ventilated and toilets must not lead directly into the processing area.
- b) *There should be at least one toilet and one hand-basin per 15 male and 10 female employees.*
- c) Odourless liquid soaps and sanitising liquids must be provided and dispensed from wall mounted units.
- d) Paper towel dispensers and a bin for used paper towels must be provided in every wash area. The use of air driers is not permitted in food production areas.
- e) Hygiene notices must be clearly displayed in all toilet areas indicating that hands must be washed after the use of the facilities.

3.50

WASHING FACILITIES IN PRODUCTION

- a) In slaughter halls, all operatives must have direct access to hand-washing facilities at their workstations.
- b) In boning halls, all operatives must have direct access to hand-washing facilities close to their individual work areas.

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4 Appendices

Reference Information

Note: The following references are provided for information purposes only. It does not represent the full list of regulations applicable. (See also Introduction 1.1.f)

REGULATIONS AND DIRECTIVES

- Commission Regulation (EC) No 2076/2005 laying down transitional arrangements for the implementation of Regulations (EC) 853/2004, (EC) 854/2004 and (EC) 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council and amending Regulations (EC) no 853/2004 and (EC) 854/2004.
- Commission Regulation (EC) No 2075/2005 laying down specific rules on official controls for *Trichinella* in meat.
- Regulation (EC) No 2074/2005 laying down implementing measures for certain products under Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and for the organisation of official controls under (EC) No 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council and regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council, derogating from Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and amending Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 and (EC) No 854/2004.
- Regulation (EC) No 396/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council on maximum residue levels of pesticides in or on food and feed of plant and animal origin and amending Council Directive 91/414/EEC.
- Regulation EC/1935/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 October 2004 on materials and articles intended to come into contact with food repealing Directives 80/590/EEC and 89/109/EEC.
- Regulation (EC) No 854/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down specific rules for the organisation of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption.
- Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin.
- Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Hygiene of Foodstuffs.
- Guidance Document (Draft in preparation) on the implementation of procedures based on HACCP principles, and on the facilitation of the implementation of the HACCP principles in certain food businesses.
- Regulation (EC) No178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28th January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law and establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures on matters of food policy.

- Directive 2002/99/EC laying down animal health rules governing the production, processing, distribution and introduction of products of animal origin for human consumption.
- European Communities (Specified Risk Material) Regulations, 2001 (S. I. 164 of 2001) (as amended).

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

- S.I. 438: 2002. European Communities (Labelling, Presentation And Advertising Of Foodstuffs) Regulations, 2000 (as amended).
- S.I. 400:2001 Commission Regulation (EC) No 466/2001 setting maximum levels for certain contaminants in foodstuffs.
- S.I. 439:2000, European Communities (Drinking Water) regulations, 2000.
- S.I. 507: 1998, Control of Animal Remedies and their Residues Regulations, 1998.
- S.I. 114: 1995, European Communities (Protection Of Animals At Time Of Slaughter) Regulations, 1995.
- S.I. 110: 1992 European Communities (Identification Of Foodstuff Lot) Regulations, 1992.
- S.I. 307: 1991, European Communities (Materials And Articles Intended To Come Into Contact With Foodstuffs) Regulations, 1991.

QUALITY STANDARDS

- I.S. EN ISO 22000: 2005 Food Safety Management Systems – Requirements for any organisation in the food chain.
- ISO 9001:2000 Quality Management Systems – Requirements.
- I.S. EN 45011:1998, General Criteria for Certification Bodies Operating Product Certification.
- I.S. 342:1997, Guide to good hygiene practice for the food processing industry in accordance with Council Directive 94/43/EEC on Hygiene in Foodstuffs (NSAI) (as amended).
- ISO 17025, General Requirements For The Competence Of Testing And Calibration Laboratories.

OTHER REFERENCES

DAF

- Pig Welfare Requirements on Farm and in Transit, 2003.
- Guidelines for Animal Welfare During Transport Within Ireland.

FSAI

- Guidance Note 8, The Implementation of Food Safety Management Systems in Beef and Lamb Slaughter Plants based on HACCP.
- Guidance Note 10, Product Recall and Traceability (as amended).
- Guidance Note 18, Determination of Product Shelf Life.
- Guidance Note (draft), Production of Heat Processed and Chilled Foods.

Health and Safety Authority

- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005.

TEAGASC

- Guidance note on the implementation of the microbiological testing procedures and interpretation of results as required by European Communities (Fresh meat and poultry checks on general hygiene) Regulations 2003. Training guidance note number NFC/Meat/1/2003.
- Various publications on Animal welfare (refer to Teagasc for details).

AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS

All Irish Legislation is available from the Government Publications Sales Office, Sun Alliance House, Molesworth Street, Dublin 2 or Department of Agriculture and Food, Agriculture House, Kildare Street, Dublin 2 (www.agriculture.ie) or may be downloaded from the Irish Statute Book website (www.irishstatutebook.ie).

Irish Standards are available from the National Standards Authority of Ireland, Glasnevin, Dublin 11 (www.nsai.ie).

FSAI Documents are available from the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, Abbey Court, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1 (www.fsai.ie).

HSA Documents are available from the Health and Safety Authority, 10 Hogan Place, Dublin 2 (www.hsa.ie).

Teagasc Documents are available from Teagasc the Agriculture and Food Development Authority, Oak Park, Carlow. (www.teagasc.ie).

Compositional Product Parameters

All products must conform to the following parameters (as demonstrated by analysis or calculation based on trend information):

Product	Maximum Added Water %	Maximum Salt (as NaCl) %
Wiltshire Bacon	10	4.0
Bone-in and Boneless Bacon Products:		
Gammon Steaks	10	2.75
Gammon Joints	10	3.35
Bacon Joints (Back & Streaky)	10	3.35
Fore-end Joints (Collar, Shoulder, Breast)	10	3.35
Rashers (Back & Streaky)	10	3.35
Cooked Hams	5	2.53

Meat Plants SOPs

DAF List of Standard Operating Procedures for Slaughter and Cutting Plants

The Standard Operational Procedures as listed hereunder is not exhaustive. It is intended to identify the major activities for which SOPs must be developed and implemented. In the development of SOPs Good Hygiene Practice (GHP) and Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) must be incorporated, as appropriate. This list is published by:

Veterinary Public Health Inspection Service
Department Of Agriculture and Food
April 2002

1. Plant Sanitation [Required as a condition of Ministerial Approval]
2. Equipment Sanitation [Required as a condition of Ministerial Approval]
3. Structural Preventative Maintenance Programme [Required as a condition of Ministerial Approval]
4. Equipment Preventative Maintenance Programme [Required as a condition of Ministerial Approval]
5. Staff Training Programme [Required as a condition of Ministerial Approval]
6. Operational Hygiene Management System [including personnel hygiene and ongoing fitness to handle/work on meat]
7. Live Animal Intake And Lairage Management System [including in the case of pig slaughter plants provision for the segregation of category 3 pigs under the National Salmonella Programme, to ensure that cross contamination of live animals cannot arise, and the provisions of animal welfare legislation must be incorporated in this SOP]
8. National Residues Sampling Programme
9. Primary Carcase Chill Management System [including calibration and management of temperature control and recording equipment]
10. Marshalling Hall And Dispatch Management System [including meat transport vehicle control/management system]

11. Boning Hall Intake Management System [including the identification and removal of contamination] (In the case of stand alone cutting plants, the intake management system must include provision for identification checks, temperature checks, contamination inspection, and provision for rejection)
12. Boning Hall Management System [including temperature control and calibration of temperature control and recording equipment, handling of meat contaminated through the finding of abscesses, injection sites, meat falling from work surfaces or conveyors, equipment sterilisers, and metal detection equipment]
13. Wrapped/Packaged Meat Handling System [including metal detection and application of both commercial and veterinary control labels]
14. Vac-Pac Chill Management System [including meat transport vehicle management system]
15. Marshalling And Dispatch Management System
16. Vermin And Pest Control Programme
17. Microbiological Checks Programme For Carcase And Cut Meat, Plant And Equipment
18. Carcase And Cut Meat Traceability System [including meat recall procedures]
19. Water Storage, Treatment And Analysis (including, in the case of water analysis, details of the sampling point rotation through the plant)

Product Dispatch Standards

All products at dispatch must conform to the following parameters (as demonstrated by analysis or calculation based on trend information):

- Temperature: 7°C Maximum

Note: Bacteriological Standards are guidelines only. It is a delayed parameter and it is recommended the results be logged and analysed for trends.

Boneless Pork

- Completely wrapped,
- No drip in frozen or fresh cartons.

Wiltshire Bacon:

- No Surface Salt,
- Dry and free from slime.

Cooked Ham:

- No noticeable dark or pale areas,
- Maximum size of air/jelly pocket or fat/gristle: 15 mm (once), 10 mm (twice or more),
- Texture: open with no rubbery or tough properties.

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Bord Bia, Clurwilliam Court, Lower Mount Street, Dublin 2
Tel: 01 668 5155 Fax: 01 668 7521 Web: www.bordbia.ie



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